

IN THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the Application:

1. (Currently amended) A method comprising:

(a) receiving a polling request that specifies a first temporal period for a plurality of expected future transmissions;

(b) transmitting a plurality of polls to the sender of said polling request;

(c) receiving a response to at least one of said plurality of polls;

(d) estimating a first temporal offset for said first temporal period based on at least one of:

(i) when said response was received, and

(ii) when at least one of said plurality of polls was transmitted; and

(e) establishing a polling schedule based on said first temporal period and said first temporal offset wherein the temporal offset for the temporal period reduces a delay between when a station queues a frame and when a station transmits a frame.

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3. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1 further comprising:

(f) receiving a plurality of frames for forwarding to said sender of said polling request; and

(g) determining whether the arrival times of said frames are in accordance with a second temporal offset and a second temporal period; and

(h) establishing, when said arrival times are in accordance with said second temporal offset and said second temporal period, a transmission schedule for transmitting each of said frames to said sender of said polling request;

wherein said transmission schedule is based on said second temporal offset and said second temporal period wherein said second response is used since said second response may not include a time required to gain contention based access to a shared

communications channel while said first response may include a time required to gain contention based access to a shared communications channel.

4. (Original) The method of claim 3 further comprising

(j) transmitting:

(i) each of said frames to said sender of said polling request in accordance with said transmission schedule, and

(ii) a poll to said sender of said polling request in accordance with said polling schedule.

5. (Currently amended) The method of claim 3 further comprising (j) combining said polling schedule and said transmission schedule into a composite schedule, wherein the composite schedule avoids collisions between the polling schedule and the transmission schedule if said polling schedule and said transmission schedule were used alone.

6. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said transmitting and said receiving are via a shared-communications channel.

7. (Currently amended) A method comprising:

(a) receiving a polling request that specifies a first temporal period for a plurality of expected future transmissions;

(b) transmitting a first poll to the sender of said polling request;

(c) receiving a first response to said first poll;

(d) transmitting a second poll to said sender of said polling request;

(e) receiving a second response to said second poll;

(f) estimating a first temporal offset for said first temporal period based on at least

(i) when said second response was received, and

(ii) when said second poll was transmitted; and

(g) establishing a polling schedule based on said first temporal period and said first

temporal offset wherein the temporal offset for the temporal period reduces a delay between when a station queues a frame and when a station transmits a frame.

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9. (Currently amended) The method of claim 7 further comprising:

(h) receiving a plurality of frames for forwarding to said sender of said polling request; and

(i) determining whether the arrival times of said frames are in accordance with a second temporal offset and a second temporal period; and

(j) establishing, when said arrival times are in accordance with said second temporal offset and said second temporal period, a transmission schedule for transmitting each of said frames to said sender of said polling request wherein said second response is used since said second response may not include a time required to gain contention based access to a shared communications channel while said first response may include a time required to gain contention based access to a shared communications channel;

wherein said transmission schedule is based on said second temporal offset and said second temporal period.

10. (Original) The method of claim 9 further comprising

(k) transmitting:

(i) each of said frames to said sender of said polling request in accordance with said transmission schedule, and

(ii) a poll to said sender of said polling request in accordance with said polling schedule.

11. (Currently amended) The method of claim 9 further comprising combining said polling schedule and said transmission schedule into a composite schedule, wherein the composite schedule avoids collisions between the polling schedule and the transmission schedule if said polling schedule and said transmission schedule were used alone.

12. (Currently amended) An apparatus comprising;

(a) a receiver for receiving a polling request that specifies a first temporal period for a plurality of expected future transmissions;

(b) a transmitter for transmitting a plurality of polls to the sender of said polling request;

(c) a processor for estimating a first temporal offset for said first temporal period based on at least one of:

(i) when said response was received, and

(ii) when at least one of said plurality of polls was transmitted; and

wherein said processor is also for establishing a polling schedule based on said first temporal period and said first temporal offset wherein the temporal offset for the temporal period reduces a delay between when a station queues a frame and when a station transmits a frame.

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14. (Currently amended) The apparatus of claim 12 wherein said receiver is also for receiving a plurality of frames for forwarding to said sender of said polling request; and wherein said processor is also for

(iii) determining whether the arrival times of said frames are in accordance with a second temporal offset and a second temporal period, and

(iv) establishing, when said arrival times are in accordance with said second temporal offset and said second temporal period, a transmission schedule based on said second temporal offset and said second temporal period for transmitting each of said frames to said sender of said polling request, wherein said second response is used since said second response may not include a time required to gain contention based access to a shared communications channel while said first response may include a time required to gain contention based access to a shared communications channel.

15. (Original) The apparatus of claim 14 wherein said transmitter is also for transmitting
- (i) each of said frames to said sender of said polling request in accordance with said transmission schedule, and
  - (ii) a poll to said sender of said polling request in accordance with said polling schedule.
16. (Currently amended) The apparatus of claim 14 wherein said processor is also for combining said polling schedule and said transmission schedule into a composite schedule, wherein the composite schedule avoids collisions between the polling schedule and the transmission schedule if said polling schedule and said transmission schedule were used alone.
17. (Original) The apparatus of claim 12 wherein said transmitter transmits via a shared-communications channel, and wherein said receiver receives via said shared-communications channel.
18. (Currently amended) An apparatus comprising:
- (a) a transceiver for:
    - (i) receiving a polling request that specifies a first temporal period for a plurality of expected future transmissions,
    - (ii) transmitting a first poll to the sender of said polling request
    - (iii) receiving a first response to said first poll,
    - (iv) transmitting a second poll to said sender of said polling request, and
    - (v) receiving a second response to said second poll;
  - (b) a processor for estimating a first temporal offset for said first temporal period based on at least one of:
    - (i) when said second response was received, and
    - (ii) when said second poll was transmitted; andwherein said processor is also for establishing a polling schedule based on said first temporal period and said first temporal offset wherein the temporal offset for the

temporal period reduces a delay between when a station queues a frame and when a station transmits a frame.

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20. (Original) The apparatus of claim 18 wherein said receiver is also for receiving a plurality of frames for forwarding to said sender of said polling request; and wherein said processor is also for:

(iii) determining whether the arrival times of said frames are in accordance with a second temporal offset and a second temporal period, and

(iv) establishing, when said arrival times are in accordance with said second temporal offset and said second temporal period, a transmission schedule for transmitting each of said frames to said sender of said polling request wherein said transmission schedule is based on said second temporal offset and said second temporal period.

21. (New) The method of claim 5 wherein said combining said polling schedule and said transmission schedule into a composite schedule further comprises:

determining whether any transmission events are scheduled that would collide with any polling events; and

when a transmission event would collide with a polling event then scheduling said transmission event to a time which would not collide with a polling event.

22. (New) The method of claim 11 wherein said combining said polling schedule and said transmission schedule into a composite schedule further comprises:

determining whether any transmission events are scheduled that would collide with any polling events; and

when a transmission event would collide with a polling event then scheduling said transmission event to a time which would not collide with a polling event.

23. (New) The apparatus of claim 16 wherein said combining said polling schedule and said transmission schedule into a composite schedule further comprises:

determining whether any transmission events are scheduled that would collide with any polling events; and

when a transmission event would collide with a polling event then scheduling said transmission event to a time which would not collide with a polling event.